

United States Department of the Interior

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY Reston, Virginia 20192

In Reply Refer To: Mail Stop 500

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Resources Agency of California

November 2, 2001

Honorable Gray Davis Governor of California Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Governor Davis:

The U. S. Geological Survey (USGS) has a mission responsibility to support the protection of critical national infrastructure during times of national crisis through Executive Order 12656 and Presidential Decision Directive-65. Our responsibilities for providing geographic information support in response to acts of domestic terrorism are further defined in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Federal Response Plan ESF-5 and in the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Contingency Plan 0500 of August 2001. During periods of national emergency, the USGS works closely with the National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NIMA), Department of Defense. NIMA provides mapping and geographic information support for U.S. military and national security objectives, historically for areas outside the borders of the United States.

In light of the recent terrorist attacks within the United States, it has become clear that our Nation's security depends upon geographic information to help prepare for and respond to national emergencies. It is critical to national security that we assure the availability of geographic information to planning, emergency response, law enforcement, and military authorities responsible for homeland security. Accordingly, the USGS and NIMA are pursuing a joint strategy for identifying, acquiring, integrating, and sharing geographic data that meet both civilian and military requirements. This plan, named "Geospatial Assurance," incorporates data standards established by the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC).

State and local governments are the primary sources for high-resolution critical infrastructure data. A key objective of Geospatial Assurance is to integrate geographic data from State and local governments. To achieve this goal in a timely and efficient manner, the USGS will rely on States to facilitate access to State and local geographic data. We intend to coordinate as closely as possible with other Federal agencies to avoid redundant efforts and to maximize usability of the data at all levels.

I am writing to request your cooperation in working with our USGS California Mapping Liaison to inventory and acquire critical infrastructure and imagery data for the many cities in California

that are of interest to agencies responsible for homeland security. The USGS would like to work with California to define the needed datasets, clarify the most appropriate data sources, and test the processing required for creating a working tool for preparedness and response.

In light of all these new developments, management of sensitive data has become an important issue. We will be working with NIMA and the FGDC to ensure that the results of the Geospatial Assurance effort are not used for the purposes they are designed to protect against. We will communicate with the States on any conclusions we come to on this subject.

I would very much appreciate your support in helping us fulfill our critical mission responsibilities at both the Federal and State levels.

Sincerely,

Barbara J. Ryan

Associate Director for Geography

Copy to: Ms. Mary D. Nichols

Mr, Gary Darling